

Frequently Asked Questions
City of Glendale Accelerator
October 1, 2019



1. Is it true that the City Received \$1 million for a Tech Accelerator?

Yes, it is true! State Senator Anthony Portantino secured \$1 million of funding from the State of California for the development of Glendale’s Accelerator Program.

2. What is Glendale’s Accelerator Program?

Glendale’s Accelerator Program will be a customized playbook for new businesses that includes coaching, mentorship and potential seed investment designed to help startups grow quickly and maximize opportunity. New businesses that participate in Glendale’s Accelerator Program will be guided through the venture growth models by an Executive-in-Residence and will work to set the appropriate business objectives and priorities in a co-work environment that includes a suite of educational, mentorship, legal, marketing, human resources, and other professional services. Program mentors will be seasoned entrepreneurs and professionals. Fundraising and access to investors will be an important component to this program. Glendale’s Accelerator Program will be highly selective and applicants will be rigorously screened. Qualified participants may be eligible to receive seed money in exchange for an equity stake in the growing company. Each cohort will conclude with a demo day. In the “off-season,” when there is not an accelerator program, the Glendale Accelerator may offer physical space to the start-up community along with developed programming such as meet-ups, office hours and networking events designed to support the network and needs of the burgeoning tech and innovation community.

3. Is Glendale’s Accelerator Program Only for Glendale Businesses?

No. While the Program’s focus is on growing and promoting Glendale startups, and retaining and attracting businesses to Glendale, the Glendale’s Accelerator Program has the potential to serve not just Glendale, but startups in the Tri-City and Downtown Los Angeles markets. Glendale startups often leave the area to access investors, fundraising assistance, qualified mentors, and other accelerator programs not currently offered here. The Glendale’s Accelerator Program mission is to reverse this exodus and instead to attract economic development to Glendale.

4. How Does Glendale’s Accelerator Program Differ from a Business Incubator?

Glendale’s Accelerator Program is not an incubator. Incubators typically provide physical space, infrastructure and advice for a fee, and in some instances, financial investment. Incubators also differ from accelerators because they lack an accelerator’s competitive dynamic; incubators do not include a scheduled milestone program set in a competitive co-working environment, or provide assistance from an experienced entrepreneur.

5. Is there a market for an accelerator in Glendale?

Yes! Glendale’s 2016 Tech Strategy found there are more than 1,000 tech firms representing more than 40,000 jobs in Glendale. Glendale’s geography is ideal for tech growth. Nestled between other emerging and established start-up communities such as Burbank, Pasadena and Downtown Los Angeles, Glendale

has a highly educated work force and is a dynamic marketplace ripe for investment and acceleration. In recent years the state, regional and local focus is on efforts to reduce vehicle miles traveled. Glendale's transportation and mobility planning efforts are increasingly geared towards this goal and marketing Glendale as a great place to live work and play. Glendale's Accelerator Program is the right local business startup resource that will help grow and retain businesses right here at home.

In anticipation of rolling out a new Request for Proposals for a top-notch accelerator firm, Glendale is updating its Tech Strategy based on recent data about the start-up and technology market in Glendale collected from Glendale's highly successful Tech Week programs, Tech on Tap, and surveys.

To link the 2016 Tech Strategy, please click [here](#).

6. How will the funds be used?

The \$1 million State grant will be used to implement an accelerator program in the City of Glendale. The intent is to hire a qualified accelerator operator ("Operator") for the terms described in a Request for Proposal ("RFP"), which is still being developed. The funds will be allocated to tenant improvement costs, contractual services, and to the implementation of an accelerator program.

The State funds may be in addition to the \$50,000 per year that the City of Glendale committed as part of the City Council's approval of the 2018 RFP, pending City Council approval.

It is the goal of this program to successfully spread the \$1 million over a course of three years, and by the end of that timeframe, the program will be self-sufficient through the Operator's generation of revenue. That may include charging for office space, generating sponsorship, or programming.

If there are any corporate companies, venture funds, or governmental/educational/non-profit entities interested in exploring financial partnerships, please contact Jennifer Hiramoto at jhiramoto@glendaleca.gov.

7. Has the City of Glendale hired an Accelerator Operator before?

No, it has not. However, in 2018, the City issued a Request for Proposals seeking a qualified operator to run an accelerator. The budget at that time was \$50,000 per year for up to three years. An example of the 2018 RFP can be found [here](#), but please note this will be updated and revised to account for increases in funding as well as other substantive changes in an effort to generate the greatest impact for the region.

While the City has not hired an accelerator, there is a privately-run accelerator in Glendale, the [Disney Accelerator](#), operated by the Walt Disney Company.

8. Are there restrictions with how we can use these funds?

That is still evaluated at this time, and will be clearly articulated at the release of the RFP.

9. What is the Timeframe?

The draft timeline of this program, pending City Council approval, is as follows:

- September to October 2019: Community Engagement and Survey of Accelerator Program

- Issue Survey to Potential Startups Identifying Resources Needed and Top Sub-Sectors
- Announce Grant at Glendale Tech Week, Sept. 14 to Sept. 21. Establish interest, and continue seeking feedback
- Host Community Meeting in October
- October 2019: Potential Operator and Corporate Partner Engagement
 - Host event with potential operators, corporate partners and real estate companies in effort to leverage funds for greatest impact
 - Continue due diligence by visiting established accelerators and startup-focused non-profits
- November 2019:
 - Conclude Due Diligence and Refine RFP
- December 2019:
 - Release RFP with City Council Authorization
- March 2020: Close RFP
- April 2020: Select Operator and Execute Contract, per City Council Authorization
- May 2020: Complete Tenant Improvements of Physical Space at 250 N. Orange (if this space will be utilized).
- June 2020: Release First Round of Funds to Operator
- June 2021: Release Second Round of Funds, if Accelerator Meets Metrics
- June 2022: Release Third Round, if Accelerator Meets Metrics
- June 2023: Program Concludes

10. What sector will the Accelerator focus on?

It is still undecided at this time whether the Accelerator will be industry-specific. It is likely that the Accelerator “Request for Proposals” will look to the Operator to identify the area of focus, if at all, they want to focus on. This focus may range from sector-specific to different stages in the start-up lifecycle. For example, a potential Operator may decide to run an accelerator program that is industry-agonistic, but focus on early stage start-ups and therefore run a pre-accelerator program.

11. How do you define success for this program?

This information will be articulated clearly in the Request for Proposals. Examples of past metrics as detailed in the 2018 RFP are detailed below. *Please note this is subject to change prior to the re-release of the RFP in December:*

- # of cohort participants
- # of applicants
- funding raised by program graduates
- jobs created
- Glendale companies assisted
- # of qualified mentors
- Financial investment into companies

It is also the goal of this program to be self-sufficient by the conclusion of the third year.

12. What will be required in the RFP?

A copy of the previous RFP, issued in 2018, can be found [here](#). Please note this 2018 Request for Proposals will be updated to reflect new funding, metrics and other substantive based on findings during the due diligence process.

Requirements of the RFP *may* include the following (please note this is subject to change prior to the re-release of the RFP in December):

- 1) The respondent will provide a detailed description of the Accelerator recruitment process, describing the outreach strategies used to identify and secure companies. Proposals that focus their outreach and recruitment to targeted populations (Glendale residents/companies, women, veterans, low-income entrepreneurs, etc.) with a strong preference for locally based companies are highly preferred;
- 2) A detailed description of services offered to companies and by whom, e.g. mentorship, talent acquisition, access to capital, business education, talent acquisition, etc.;
- 3) Description of how the proposed program will advance the goals of the Glendale Tech Strategy and create clear connections between the program and the larger Glendale area innovation ecosystem;
- 4) Description of how this Accelerator will be different from or should be different from other programs in Los Angeles County;
- 5) A description of the technological focus that the Accelerator will serve (if any), and a justification for the focus, including why that focus was selected;
- 6) A description of what stage or stages of the business lifecycle the Accelerator will be focusing on and offering services for (ie. Development/Seed Stage, Start-Up Stage, Growth/Survival, etc.).
- 7) Quantifiable metrics by which the success of the Accelerator will be evaluated. Sample metrics include, but are not limited to: # of cohort participants, # of applicants, funding raised by program graduates, jobs created, etc.
- 8) Recommendations for improvements/changes for future cohorts from year to year.

13. How can I get on the interest list?

If you are a potential operator or considering applying, please visit <https://www.glendaletechweek.com/accelerator>, and enter your name in the interest list.

If you are a start-up that is interested in participating the accelerator program, please take the [survey](#) here and be sure to provide your email address.

14. Additional Information

Should there be any questions, contact Economic Development Deputy Director Jennifer Hiramoto at jhiramoto@glendaleca.gov or at (818) 548-2005.